

WE CLAIM

1. A test automation framework for testing software applications including:

5 a memory for storing at least one test scenario including a test application, at least one input and an expected output;

an input selection means for selecting one or more test scenarios and, for each selected test scenario, selecting how to prepare, run and verify a test application;

a selection memory for storing the results of the input selection means;

10 select means for selecting a test application according to the contents of the selection memory;

prepare means for operating a predetermined prepare process for building the test application according to the results of the input selection means and storing a log file;

15 run means for operating a predetermined run process for running the test application according to the results of the input selection means and for storing a log file;

verify means for operating a verify process for verifying the results of the test application according to the results of the input selection means and for storing a log  
20 file; and

means for outputting a report of the tests which can include at least extracts of the preparation log file, the run log file and the verify log file if an error occurred.

2. A test automation framework according to claim 1, wherein the  
25 prepare means, run means and verify means all operate their corresponding processes on a selected application before operating their corresponding processes on the next selected application.

3. A test automation framework according to claim 1, wherein the select  
30 means selects each test application in turn for the prepare means, then each test

application in turn for the run means and then each test application in turn for the verify means.

4. A test automation framework according to claim 1 further comprising:  
5 means for performing a sanity check on the results of the input selection means and, in the case of an error, aborting in all tests and reporting an error.

5. A test automation framework according to claim 1 further comprising:  
means for preparing exit status codes from the prepare process and the run  
10 process prior to performing respectively the run process and verify process and for abandoning the respective test when the exit status codes are not OK, wherein the report of the tests can include at least extracts from the log files where the exit status codes were not OK.

- 15 6. A test automation framework according to claim 1 further comprising:  
prologue means for operating a predetermined prologue process for a plurality of test applications and storing a log file; wherein  
the input selection means is additionally for selecting how to perform and  
20 report the prologue process; and  
the report of the tests can include at least extracts of the prologue log file according to the results of the input selection means.

7. A test automation framework according to claim 6 further comprising:  
25 means for preparing an exit status code from the prologue process and abandoning tests when the exit status code is not OK, wherein the report of the tests can include at least extracts from the log files when the exit status code is not OK.

8. A test automation framework according to claim 1 further comprising:  
30 a mailer for sending the results of the tests to one or more preselected users.

9. A method of testing software applications including:
- storing in a memory at least one test scenario including a test application, at least one input and an expected output;
  - selecting one or more test scenarios and, for each selected test scenario,
  - 5 selecting how to prepare, run and verify a test application;
  - storing the results of the input selection;
  - selecting a test application according to the stored results;
  - operating a predetermined prepare process for building the test application according to the stored results and storing a log file;
  - 10 operating a predetermined run process for running the test application according to the stored results and for storing a log file;
  - operating a verify process for verifying the results of the test application according to the stored results and for storing a log file; and
  - outputting a report of the tests which can include at least extracts of the
  - 15 preparation log file, the run log file and the verify log file if an error occurred.
10. A computer readable storage medium having recorded thereon code components that, when loaded on a computer and executed, will cause that computer to operate according to claim 9.